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DESCRIPTORS	Class Activities; Classroom Environment; Cognitive Development; Constructivism (Learning); Early Childhood Education; *Emergent Literacy; Learning Activities; *Learning Centers (Classroom); Literacy; Peer Relationship; Piagetian Theory; *Play; Pretend Play; Story Telling; Student Evaluation; *Teacher Student Relationship; Theory Practice Relationship; Young Children
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ABSTRACT

When young children play in a purposefully designed, literacy-rich environment, teachers can discover and capitalize on teachable moments. This book discusses how children develop literacy and how early childhood teachers use play and other child-centered experiences to facilitate literacy development. Chapter 1, "Play and Developmentally Appropriate Practices," defines developmentally appropriate practices and discusses the role of different types of play in development. Chapter 2, "A Glimpse into Two Early Childhood Classrooms," uses vignettes from the activities in a preschool and a first-grade classroom to illustrate the usefulness of planning for play, how children develop literacy through play, the value of teachable-moment teaching, classroom play centers, retelling stories, and pretend play. Chapter 3, "Children Construct Knowledge about the World," presents Piagetian and Vygotskian ideas about how children construct knowledge and how the theory may be applied in the classroom. Chapter 4, "Children Construct Knowledge about Written Language," explores the discoveries children make as they build schemas for written language, including the functions of written language, language forms, and the significant features of written language. Chapter 5, "Discovering Children's Literacy Knowledge," examines information-seeking and observation strategies to discover children's literacy knowledge and use that information to inform the creation of a meaningful play environment and to evaluate children's uses of written language in play. Chapter 6, "Developing the Literate Play Environment," provides tips for designing literacy-related play centers. Contains 81 references. (KB)

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